



Dairy Details

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NORTHERN VALLEY DAIRY PRODUCTION MEDICINE CENTER

Dr. Borst's 2018 Christmas Gift Guide for Dairy Farmers

I don't know about other farm wives, but I struggle every year deciding what to get my husband for Christmas. Dairy farmers are tough to shop for. Of course, he thinks I'm hard to buy for too! Besides finding original ideas for each other, we have to brainstorm for our employees as well. Expressing appreciation for our help is really important. Of course, anyone who works on the farm will like the usual gift - a new pair of gloves - but it's nice to have some unconventional ideas as well. Here is my "go-to" farmer gift list, my favorite brands, and a few gifts that are a little "out of the box". All these things should be easily found online.

Gifts for Dairy Farmers:

Anything from Duluth Trading Company: DT has become my "go to" for socks and anything warm clothing for my husband. Their products are very high quality and the socks outlasted all the other brands we've ever tried. If your farmer is tall like mine, you'll love that almost everything comes in tall sizes as well. Kevin spends the entire winter in the 3 Dog Fleece Crew Base Layer Shirt (\$64.50). Don't tell him but there's another on the top of my list for him this year.

Udder Tech Coveralls: Every dairy farmer has found themselves soaking wet in January after a calving. Every dairy farmer would be very thankful for a pair of these for the next one! But remember, only line dry, or they won't be waterproof for long. They come in a variety of colors and range from \$54.99 to \$67.99.

Grilled Cheese Toaster: Who doesn't love a grilled cheese for a quick lunch on a cold day? This toaster is quick, easy, requires no pan or stove, and there is virtually nothing to clean up. It runs ~ \$30. Don't want another appliance in your kitchen? Try the reusable grilled cheese bags that you can put in your regular toaster.

Digital Brix Refractometer: When I gave my husband one of these, he rolled his eyes at me and said "oh gee, thanks". But, it's one of the most used gifts that he's ever received. Sometimes (more like always), the wife is right! Our farm uses the Brix to test the quality of our colostrum. We write the Brix value on the bag before it goes into the freezer. The higher quality colostrum is fed to heifer calves and we throw away anything that tests low. We have a Milwaukee Instruments MA871-BOX Digital Brix Refractometer and it can be purchased online for about \$135.

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Gifts for Dairy Employees:

Farm name or logo apparel: The gift of clothing with your farm's name and &/or logo on it gives your employees a feeling of "ownership" and pride in your farm team.

Stocking hat with head lamp: With less daylight, many of a dairy farm's chores are done in the dark. Stocking hats with bright head lamps keep your head warm and obviously help you see what you're doing. The one I have can be found on Amazon for \$13.93.

HotHands Hand and Toe warmers: I just restocked our house with a bunch of these for winter. The more you buy the better the price. You can find both for under a buck a pair if you shop around. I would not make it standing on cold concrete for preg checks without these!

Food: This has become my "go to gift" for almost anyone in my life....employees, clients, family, friends....they all eat!! Some of my favorites from the kitchen are lasagna, tator hot dish, apple pie, apple crisp, banana bread, and Christmas cookies. Raise your own steers? Give steaks, roasts, or hamburger. Cheese is also a never fail gift and you're supporting the dairy industry. Redhead Creamery is my "go to" for "cheesy" gifts. Their Little Lucy Brie and Ridiculously Good Cheese curds are favorites in our household. Purchased off their website, www.redheadcreamery.com, or at People's Coop in Rochester or Bluff Country Coop in Winona.

Gifts for the Dairy Farmer's Wife:

Grocery Delivery Membership: The weekly grocery run was something I always dreaded. It took a valuable chunk of time out of my weekend. Fortunately, grocery delivery isn't just for "city slickers" anymore. Memberships with Shipt and Instacart run around \$100 a year, unless you are referred by a current customer which drops it to \$50. Now you are down to a buck for a week to get groceries delivered to you! Dr. Borst would love to make a referral for every farmer's wife out there!! ☺

Instant pot: This is towards the top of this farm wife's wish list! This appliance is a huge TIME SAVER that any farm wife would appreciate. A large frozen roast can be ready in 90 minutes! No more ending up with frozen pizza for supper because someone forgot to take meat out of the freezer! They \$80 to \$150 range.

Presto Nomad Crockpot: This looks like it would be an awesome way to prepare meals for the field during harvest and hay making. It is a crock pot in an insulated picnic cooler. It includes a handle and an airtight seal for no spillage. This makes for easy serving and cleanup. They can be found for less than \$75.

Cleaning service: Finding time to do a deep clean in the house can be tough for any farm wife, especially those that spend a lot of time outside in the barn. Treat your farm wife to a cleaning service to do a deep clean for a few hours.

I hope this list makes your holiday shopping a little less stressful this year. From our veterinarians and staff, we wish you a very Merry Christmas!



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